

Her Finny Playmates

WOMAN TRAINS FISH TO EAT FROM HANDS UNDER WATER

Tame fish are not common pets yet they are very interesting, as I have found from experience. That others, if inclined, may find ways of enjoying the dwellers of the deep without taking their lives, I will tell of a school of fish that entertained us one summer on the shores of Lake Minnetonka.

We began to win their confidence by throwing crumbs to them as we sat in the boats under the willows, but noticing it was hard for them to come to the surface for food, I tried holding bits of bread in the water. At first they all sped away, but were soon back again investigating my hand, shyly, but coming nearer and nearer, till one ventured to nip the bread. It was good and harmless, and he tried again. Another came, another and another, till courage, which is everywhere contagious, spread among them, and as the days went by they seemed almost to forget fear and always swam eagerly to meet us when we went down to the lake shore.

For a time I always whistled to call them in, but later I went silently and found them just as ready to greet me as when I called. I noticed, though, that if we ran out on the pier heavily, or rocked a boat on the water, they flocked in more speedily, which fact coincided with the observations of scientists, that fish are in some way very sensitive to vibrations of the water.

In our bay the sunfish tribe was most numerous and fearless. I often put my two hands together like a dish, and holding them under the water they were instantly filled, crowded with the soft, velvety little things. There never was anything smoother and softer than a living fish in water! Rose petals would be rough in comparison.

We never startled them by taking them out of the water; had we done so the spell would, doubtless, have been broken and we should have had no tame fish. The only one I ever took from its native element was an unfortunate that had been lured by a hook and though escaping with his life had the hook still hanging in his mouth. This I removed and returned him again to the water, relieved from what was probably a painful inconvenience, though terrified and distressed; but after performing that surgical operation I was never able, if he remained with us, to distinguish him from others.

These little fellows grew very fast with the good living provided, but we no more thought of making a meal of them than of our sweet-voiced canaries.

One morning a long, slender pickerel came and made his abiding place with us. He was very much of an aristocrat, always holding himself a little aloof from the others, and never tempted to come to their table by any variety of food I could offer; though he came close and seemed never offended when I stroked his smooth sides. I always noticed what a cruel looking face he had and wondered if it was because he was very hungry. Most of the time he held himself nearly motionless in the water, but when he did move it was like a lightning flash; then all his finny companions disappeared. Making a circle through the water he would return to his usual position near the boat, watching with his set eye as if he were the appointed ruler there.

After a time my brother, coming down to the lake, saw him and asked, "How long do you think your school of fish will hold out to feed that cannibal?" The words were a

revelation. It was surprising I had never suspected his strange manners, especially as I had noticed that he always seemed to be swallowing something when he returned from his flights through the water. "Besides," brother added, "he could snap off your finger at a single bite if he chose."

There was no longer a welcome for our pickerel; instead, a willow branch was struck vigorously through the blue waves whenever he approached, and soon he came no more.

The most friendly, undisturbed individual in our living collection was a black bass. He was a little more than a foot long when we first noticed him. He seemed to make his abode in a growth of water mosses near a fallen tree, and no one ever went down to the shore that he did not swim majestically out to meet him, opening his great mouth as he neared the surface for an expected morsel, and very seldom was he doomed to disappointment. If we were slow in offering it, he would come as close as possible to shore, never hesitating to eat from our fingers, seemingly no more afraid of us than we were of him.

He was a rollicksome, jolly fish, never troubled about the necessities of life, and seemingly satisfied with its conditions. Every one felt like laughing when one saw him, and it really seemed as if he enjoyed companionship.

It was a pretty sight when our yacht steamed off from shore to see the wake of fish that followed it; and it was especially pleasing to watch them come to meet us on returning, as they always did.

No one thing gave us more pleasure during that happy summer by the lake than our tame fish, yet we resolved never to feed them another season, for our bay grew to have a reputation as a fishing ground, and it was very grievous to see the stolid old fishermen sitting by the hour pulling into their boats the trusting little creatures that we had disarmed by dispelling their fears. But for one has a lake or stream wholly his own, I know of no pleasanter pastime than making friends with the dwellers there.—Sarah A. Jenison, in St. Nicholas.

THIS WOMAN STAYS AT HOME.

In 14 Years She Has Not Spent a Night Away From Her Rock.

American women have the reputation of being restless gadabouts, not perhaps without having given grounds for the accusation; but there's one American woman who is a homestayer of the most chronic type.

Mrs. Kate Walker has lived in the lighthouse on Robbins Reef for twenty-three years, and the number doesn't have any mystic significance implying an impending departure either. For fourteen of those years, ever since her husband's death, she herself has been keeper of the light.

Robbins Reef is a ledge a mile or so north of Staten Island on the port side as you sail up the bay. You reach Mrs. Walker's home by scrambling up an iron ladder after you have reached the spot—that is all it is, a spot—by boat. As that is the only means of reaching Mrs. Walker's establishment it is easy to understand that it isn't a rush of visitors that keeps her at home.

She not only has the light to maintain—and she has never once failed in that—but there are also a siren run by an engine and a fog bell, both of which must be kept going in thick weather. According to Harper's Weekly Mrs. Walker takes a long nap in the afternoon so as to keep on the alert at night. The machinery regulating the light, which is a revolving one, has to be wound every five hours. She says that the light is never off her mind at night and that even when she sleeps she wakes up every hour.

Before her husband died she went to the Catskills once, but since she became keeper of the light she has never been further than across the

bay. Her front yard—and back and side yards too—is a narrow railed platform; beyond that only water on all sides.

LUXURIOUS SLEEPING CARS.

Those in India to Have Bathrooms and Other Conveniences.

The latest sleeping cars in India are fitted luxuriously. Like most foreign cars they are divided into compartments, but a corridor runs from end to end of the car. Each compartment contains two berths. The upper berth is of peculiarly ingenious design, so compactly constructed that a casual observer would fail to see how it can be lowered.

The compartments are large enough to accommodate the luggage that any two persons can require, and are fitted up with all kinds of conveniences. Every compartment has an electric fan under the control of the passengers, and of the three electric lamps one is a small night lamp that can be kept burning all night without inconvenience.

If a party is too large for a single compartment, says the Railroad Man's Magazine, a sliding door connecting with the adjoining compartment can be thrown open. On the other hand, if the passenger desires he can lock his door, pull down his Venetian blinds and be secure from intrusion.

At each end of the coach is a roomy bathroom, with a large bath half sunk in the floor, the walls lined with mirrors, and equipped with every imaginable sanitary device. There is also a servant's compartment. It is said this coach has been approved by the railway board as the standard type for Indian rolling stock.

Play Up to the Part You Are Cast In.

The story is so old it seems trite to repeat it, but when a girl wants to go on and play herself she has proven then and there that she does not want to act; she wants simply to show herself. It is just a plain, garden variety of ingrowing ego. Her attitude of mind at once proclaims her. She will never be an actress. But if an exceedingly good looking girl decides she wishes to play character parts, in other words, forget her personal beauty and make up plain and homely for the sake of a characterization, it's a pretty good sign that somewhere within is a spark that may mean art, says Paul Armstrong in Success Magazine, and he goes on to say:

Acting is, after all simply self-hypnotism—the trick of being some other person than oneself; of being it in mind and voice, body and soul. It goes deeper than clothes, wigs and grease paint, and, as in all other things, the mental strength always wins.

According to no less an authority on the art of acting than Miss Olga Nethersole it is a great paradox.

While it is certainly egotism which leads a girl to believe the public wish to applaud her, nevertheless, Miss Nethersole maintains, "There is no ego in art." In other words, she means that it is the utter effacement of the person—the ego—which makes an actress.

350 YEARS OF LABOR.

A single firm of cutlery manufacturers at Sheffield, England, has in its employ six workmen who have been with the firm continuously for a total of 350 years. This means an average of almost sixty years of continuous work for each employee.

Two of these men are 75, two are 76, one is 74 and one 73. A picture of the group published in the Iron Age shows a sturdy looking set of men. That they must be, as they are still at work. Three of them are cutters and three grinders.

The same firm has people of three generations at the bench in its employ—from grandparents to their grandchildren. These workers began as children, according to custom, and have been continuously with the house ever since as piece workers.

LABOR WORLD.

The Iron molders' union at Dallas, Texas, has been reorganized.

A new union of blacksmiths was formed in Wichita, Kan., recently.

The janitors' union in New York City publishes a monthly magazine.

A State federation, comprising in its membership about 6000 miners, was organized recently in Wyoming.

In Germany the percentage of unemployment for June is returned as 2.8, which is slightly better than June, 1907.

The molders' union, of Portland, Ore., seeks to obtain legislation that will abolish the manufacture of stoves in the State penitentiary.

The proposal to amalgamate all the engineering trade unions in Great Britain is rapidly gaining ground among kindred organizations.

In the canton of Schvyz, Switzerland, in the dangerous trades apprentices must be adequately insured against accident by the master.

Members of the Minneapolis (Minn.) carpenters' union have started a movement to obtain a site and erect a building of their own.

Concord (N. H.) City Council has voted for the weekly pay law for city laborers, extra pay for overtime work and preference given to American citizens.

The San Francisco (Cal.) Janitors' Union, which is not affiliated with any international body, has under consideration a proposal to establish a death benefit.

The New York State Branch of the Amalgamated Association of Meat Cutters and Butchers has a membership of 17,000, against 3000 in 1908, a gain of 14,000.

At the convention of the Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers' Association in Boston recently it was decided to increase the per capita tax from twenty-five cents to thirty cents a month.

Good Things in the November Lippincott's.

Approximately enough, both love and politics figure in the plot of Mary Imray Taylor's new novel, "The Magistrate of Paradise"—politics being appropriate to the season, and love to all seasons. The story is published complete in the November Lippincott's, which, by the way, is an extraordinarily fine number.

Some remarkable short stories will be found in this issue. One of them is "Mary and Martha at Lunch," by Marion Hill, author of "The Pettison Twins." This has rare originality and subtle humor, with a dash of pathos by way of seasoning. "Love and a Morning Ride," by Elizabeth Mawry Coombs, is a striking tale of the Southland. Other good stories are "A Dead Letter Come to Life," by Anne Warner; "Lost—a Turkey," by Elliott Flower; "The Sight of the Soul," by Helen Talbot Porter; and "Much Ado About Nothing," by Thomas L. Masson.

Living right is no guaranty that a man will not be left.

Wood's Descriptive Fall Seed Catalog

now ready, gives the fullest information about all

Seeds for the Farm and Garden,

Grasses and Clovers, Vetches, Alfalfa, Seed Wheat, Oats, Rye, Barley, etc.

Also tells all about

Vegetable & Flower Seeds

that can be planted in the fall to advantage and profit, and about

Hyacinths, Tulips and other Flowering Bulbs, Vegetable and Strawberry Plants, Poultry Supplies and Fertilizers.

Every Farmer and Gardener should have this catalog. It is invaluable in its helpfulness and suggestive ideas for a profitable and satisfactory Farm or Garden. Catalogue mailed free on request. Write for it.

T. W. WOOD & SONS, Seedsmen, - Richmond, Va.